



## **The organisation of mineral exploitation and the relationship to urban structures and local business development**

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## **The organisation of mineral exploitation and the relationship to urban structures and local business development**

The paper explores relations between mining and urban structures as these are decisive for involving the local workforce and developing local businesses. A major challenge for Greenland is the on-going decoupling between existing settlements and the main export industry based on marine living resources. Because Greenland, as other Arctic regions, are structured in relatively isolated island economies with only modest trade between the settlements and no possibility of commuting, a number of settlements are left without substantial industrial base. Administration of the settlement becomes the main occupation and the societies face growing unemployment and widespread social problems. Mineral extraction is seen as a key to overcome the economic challenges. Few mineral resources are located in proximity to existing settlements. Most mining companies set the stage for a quick extraction of the resources using immigrant and migrant labour, working intensively over a period of time, while living in shantytowns. Both local and international experiences show that such an organization of work life is not attractive for the population, and that it often provides significant human and social challenges also for the surrounding community. The paper explores if a different and long-term organisation of exploitation of mineral resources with establishment of flexible settlements creates an attractive and sustainable alternative with a reasonable population and economic diversity.